

**Cultivars** - Popular bedding plant cultivars of common geranium are 50% seed grown and 50% cuttings-grown. Seed grown cultivars are described below (a “series” is a group of different colored individuals within a cultivar):

‘Dynamo’ Series - 5 colors, early flowering (90-95 days from seed), small plants (8 - 10 inches) with small leaves.

‘Elite’ Series - 6 colors, very early flowering (85 - 95 days from seed), profuse blooming, large flowers in well rounded heads held just above the foliage on small plants.

‘Multibloom’ Series - 8 colors, very early flowering, more flower heads, deeply zonal leaves, small plants, occasional poor field performance.

‘Orbit’ Series - 17 colors, early flowering, medium sized, dependable plants.

‘Pinto’ Series - 11 colors, large plants (12 - 14 inches tall), mid-early flowering (110 days from seed), deeply zonal leaves, great garden performance.

‘Ringo 2000’ Series - 9 colors, earliest blooming (92-97 days from seed), very consistent, fast germination, medium sized plants (10-12 inches tall), very good garden performance.

‘Maverick Star’ - rose and white bicolor flowers.

‘Orange Appeal’ - first hybrid seed grown geranium with brilliant orange colored flowers.

‘Tetra Scarlet’, ‘Freckles’ - Tetraploid (3 sets of chromosomes instead of normal 2) plants are huskier and bear extra large flowers.

Cuttings-grown cultivars were tested in 1995 at Penn State University, where the following were found to be good performers: ‘Evening Glow’, ‘Julia’, ‘Lucille’, and ‘Medallion Dark Red’; the following were fair to good performers: ‘Angel’, ‘Cotton Candy’, ‘Gypsy’, ‘Lollipop’, ‘Melody’, ‘Morning Mist’, ‘North Star’, ‘Peaches’, and ‘Sassy Dark Red’; ‘Red Hots’ was judged fair; and the following were

judged poor to fair performers: ‘First Kiss’, ‘Jelly Bean’, and ‘Love Song’.

**Bedding Plant Evaluations** - Each year cultivars of geraniums and other bedding plants are evaluated in the annual NC State University Bedding Plant Trial Gardens, a report of which can be viewed at the internet address <<http://www2.ncsu.edu/floriculture/>>

**Indoor Culture** - Geraniums make attractive and interesting houseplants. All types perform and flower best under high light intensity but will survive under moderate light. Temperatures of 65 to 70 degrees F during the day and around 55 degrees F at night are ideal. Grow in a well drained potting mix for houseplants. Fertilize with a water soluble houseplant fertilizer monthly in spring and summer, and every other month during the fall and winter. For more information refer to Horticulture Information Leaflet No. 8554, *Indoor Plant Selection and Care*.

**Outdoor Container Culture** - Geraniums make attractive additions to the landscape when grown in containers at entrances, on decks and patios, or in window boxes. Choose pots at least 8 to 12 inches in diameter, large enough to hold enough substrate for a good root system, and to contain enough water to prevent wilting during hot, dry weather. Plants may need to be repotted into larger containers later in the season if they have grown large and begin to wilt between waterings. Water as often as needed to prevent wilting, because the leaves of wilted plants turn yellow and drop off, resulting in unattractive, leggy plants. Select containers with adequate drainage holes, and do not allow pots to sit in saucers of water. Instead, place the pot on a layer of gravel in the saucer. Avoid overhead watering which wets leaves and flowers, which can encourage development of diseases. Do not use heavy clay garden soils which may not provide sufficient aeration. A mix of equal parts of garden soil, peat moss and perlite makes a good growing medium. Leaf mold, composted pine bark or composted yard waste can be substituted for peat moss. Mix in 1/2 teaspoon of a complete garden fertilizer plus one teaspoon of dolomitic limestone per volume of each 8 inch pot. Commercial potting mixes are ready to use, light in weight, convenient for gardeners and support good growth of geraniums.